



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

DEC 12 2003

Dear Advisory Council Members and Constituents:

The enclosed document summarizes the National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) public workshop held on December 4, 2003 in Half Moon Bay concerning the shared boundary and the Joint Management Area (JMA) between the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) and the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS). I was very pleased by the level of Advisory Council and public participation and the insightful comments presented at this workshop. The communities of the north-central coast of California continue to impress me with their dedication to protecting and conserving the marine and coastal resources of these sanctuaries.

With that said, I want to reiterate the NMSP's commitment to engaging the public in an open and public process not only for this specific issue but the other 41 issues that are being addressed as part of the Joint Management Plan Review (JMPR). I sincerely believe that the resulting strategies have and will continue to benefit from constituent and Advisory Council input.

I intend to make a final decision regarding the shared boundary and the JMA by about January 31, 2004. As part of my decision process, I will fully review and assess the draft findings report from the internal boundary assessment team, the GFNMS and MBNMS Advisory Council recommendations on this draft findings report, all assessments prepared by NMSP staff regarding programmatic considerations of boundary modifications, the public and Advisory Council comments received at the December 4th meeting, and any other comments received by January 5th, 2004. My final decision will reflect a strategy to:

- Ensure that the protection of sanctuary resources are maintained or enhanced
- Increase the quality of NMSP programs and services available to local communities
- Reinforce a sense of community ownership and coastal stewardship
- Provide for more efficient and cost-effective uses of program resources

My final decision, with supporting documentation, will be distributed through NMSP distribution networks (both local and national) and will be posted on the JMPR website at <http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan/>.

If you have any questions, please call Michael Weiss, Deputy Director, at 301-713-3125 x216 or (Michael.Weiss@noaa.gov). Thanks again for your continued interest in the National Marine Sanctuary Program and for helping shape the future management of these sanctuaries.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Basta
Director
National Marine Sanctuary Program

Enclosure



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CORDELL BANK, GULF OF THE FARALLONES AND MONTEREY BAY
NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES
JOINT MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
December 4, 2003 – SUMMARY

Workshop Summary

A public workshop was held in Half Moon Bay on December 4, 2003, concerning the shared boundary and the Joint Management Area (JMA) between the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary (MBNMS) and the Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (GFNMS). The National Marine Sanctuary Program (NMSP) Director, Daniel J. Basta, and staff presented information evaluated to date, conducted a panel discussion to address specific questions and concerns, and listened to Sanctuary Advisory Council and public concerns. Input and advice received during this workshop will be incorporated into the Director's decision process and will inform the NMSP on how to best incorporate this issue into the Joint Management Plan Review Process (JMPR), which is currently underway.

To view the NMSP's presentation at the December 4 workshop, a written transcript of the entire workshop, and other information discussed at this workshop, please visit:
<http://www.sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan/>

Approximately 100 people participated in the workshop, representing the following groups:

- General public (approximately 60 individuals)
- GFNMS Advisory Council (10 members)
- MBNMS Advisory Council (10 members)
- NMSP (20 staff from HQ, CB, GF & MB)

Public Comment Summary

In total, more than 40 people provided written and oral comments. The range of concerns addressed by the advisory council members and the public included:

- Move the shared boundary between GFNMS and MBNMS from its current location in Marin County to the Santa Cruz/San Mateo County Line (Año Nuevo).
- Maintain the contiguous boundary between GFNMS and MBNMS where it is presently located (status quo).
- Continue, expand, and coordinate programs and services delivered to San Mateo County communities. Areas of concern included research and monitoring, volunteer, education, oil spill response and restoration, and water quality protection programs.
- Maintain the existing congressional prohibition on oil and gas exploration, development, and production in the MBNMS.
- Consider including the San Francisco exemption area (the "doughnut hole") into the NMSP.

Elected Officials Comment Summary

Several offices of elected officials at the federal, state, and local levels of government provided both written and oral statements. Summaries of each are listed below.

- A joint letter from Congresswoman Anna Eshoo and Congressman Sam Farr, inquired about “how administratively moving a boundary between the sanctuaries would effect the level of protection afforded against offshore oil and gas development” for this area.
- A letter from Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey recommended the boundary be moved to Año Nuevo.
- A letter from California Assemblymember John Laird recommended leaving the boundary where it is presently located.
- A letter from San Mateo County Supervisor Richard Gordon on behalf of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors recommended moving the boundary to the Santa Cruz/San Mateo line and that the NMSP create an “adequate public process for full consideration of the issues relevant to Sanctuary boundaries off the coast of San Mateo County.”
- Individual letters from Santa Cruz County Supervisors Ellen Pirie and Mardi Wormhoudt recommended leaving the boundary where it is presently located.
- A letter from Santa Cruz Mayor Scott Kennedy opposing any change to the existing sanctuaries’ boundaries.

Advisory Council Actions

Both the MBNMS Advisory Council and the GFNMS Advisory Council convened a meeting at the end of this workshop. During these sessions, Advisory Council members took the following actions:

GFNMS Advisory Council

The GFNMS Advisory Council had a quorum of members present and voted to forward “A Position Paper on the GFNMS Southern Boundary Issue” to the NMSP. The paper outlines their reasoning for moving the GFNMS / MBNMS boundary to Año Nuevo and describes their concerns about the process to address this issue. Copies of the paper were distributed at the workshop and to the MBNMS Advisory Council during their regularly scheduled council meeting on Friday, Dec. 5.

MBNMS Advisory Council

The MBNMS Advisory Council could not vote because the chair and vice chair were not present, but discussed the issue. They provided comments to the NMSP Director and the public at the closing of the workshop. These comments reflected recognition that MBNMS council members were compelled by the sentiment of some San Mateo County residents who feel disenfranchised; that one solution may be a boundary shift, but that other options should be considered.

The MBNMS Advisory Council continued their discussion at their December 5th meeting where they developed a statement for the NMSP expressing their concerns regarding: the sense of disenfranchisement expressed by some community members at the December 4th workshop; the need for the NMSP to do more to respond to the needs of the San Mateo County communities; the administrative costs as well as the risks of loss of protection against oil and gas development if the shared boundary with the Gulf of the Farallones were to move; and the need to fully consider other options for resolving this issue rather than only a boundary change.

Next Steps

1. The NMSP will accept public and Advisory Council comments, faxes, or E-mails until January 5, 2004. Please send the comments to:
Michael Weiss, Deputy Director
National Marine Sanctuary Program
1305 East-West Highway, N/ORM6
Silver Spring, MD 20910
E-Mail: jointplancomments@noaa.gov
Fax: (301) 713-0404
2. The NMSP Director will make a final decision regarding the shared boundary and the JMA by about January 31, 2004. Notification of the decision will be distributed through NMSP distribution networks (both local and national) and will be posted on the Jmpr website at <http://sanctuaries.nos.noaa.gov/jointplan/>. Any proposed action would be incorporated as appropriate into the draft management plans and supporting environmental documents for the MBNMS and GFNMS.

Program contact: Michael Weiss, Deputy Director, 301-713-3125 x216

Media contact: Sarah Marquis, Media Coordinator, 949-222-2212, (cell) 949-300-1322